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seem to have been quite clearly worked out. The statement is: "Law was not thought of as the result of enactment, but as the time-honored custom of the tribe or nation. It was God who gave laws." The two sentences represent two different ways of looking at law, and the two should be sharply distinguished. The earliest source of law, if we call it law, was tribal custom. "It is not so done in Israel" was sufficient to condemn an act as criminal. But where tribal custom was not clear there was always an appeal to an authority, primarily to the divinity at the sanctuary, later to the king. The king gave laws just as truly as God did. In neither case was there statutory enactment, but when the body of case law came to be of a certain size it was promulgated by statute. At least I can see no difference between the solemn publication of Deuteronomy and the publication of Hammurabi's Code. Professor Soares has the correct apprehension, as is shown by his discussion on pp. 136 ff., but this does not seem quite consistent with the passage just quoted.

Exegetical tradition is on the side of the statement that the Hebrew word translated "atone" means "to cover." The tradition, however, rests on very insecure foundations. The verb used is one of the technical liturgical terms whose original meaning is lost to us. I put a query also at the statement that the scapegoat was sent into the desert *symbolically* to carry the sins out of sight. To the early worshiper, and doubtless also to the priests who formulated the code, the sins were conceived realistically, and were in actual fact loaded upon the goat and carried into the desert.

These are minor matters. The book as a whole will command the approval of thoughtful men, and it is to be hoped that it will be widely used by the class for which it is intended.

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BABYLONIAN LETTERS OF THE HAMMURABI PERIOD¹

During the past ten years there have appeared no less than ten publications in the new Babylonian series of the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, including one of Aramaic divination texts. The latest is by Professor Arthur Ungnad of Jena, who during a leave of

¹ *Babylonian Letters of the Hammurabi Period*. By Arthur Ungnad. University of Pennsylvania. The University Museum Publications of the Babylonian Section, Vol. VII. Philadelphia, Pa.

absence occupied the Clark chair of Assyriology at the University of Pennsylvania for the year 1913-14. The volume of early Babylonian letters is the result of his efforts during that year.

The work contains 131 numbers and fragments of letters belonging to the Hammurabi dynasty, including an administrative document, No. 37, and a letter belonging to the Assyrian period. Among them is a dated letter, No. 89, written in the reign of Ammi-zaduga. Dated letters are rarely found. The Assyrian letter, No. 132, is a message from a king, but unfortunately it is only imperfectly preserved. Although a number of fragments have been included which do not have any value, the volume on the whole contains many valuable texts, and is an important contribution to the epistolary literature of the Babylonians. Eight of the texts are translated in the Introduction, but the author expects to publish translations of all in the second part of his *Babylonische Briefe*.

It is gratifying that Ungnad is not one of those who copy closely written texts in such a way that they appear more difficult to read than the originals. His copies are clear and easily read. Besides, his reputation for exact scholarship inspires confidence in his reproductions.

The largest portion of the letters contained in the volume were purchased from dealers, and came from Sippar. About a score and a half were discovered at Nippur, through the work of the expeditions conducted by Peters and Haynes. These letters the author assigns to the time of Hammurabi and Samsi-iluna. From internal evidence, and especially with the assistance of name lists made up from the names which occur upon dated legal documents, the author has attempted to present the letters in historical order, and has assigned them to this or that reign. It is interesting to note that the letters from Nippur show a more archaic style of writing than those from Sippar. The contract literature from the same site exhibits the same peculiarity. At Sippar and Babylon, although these were cities not far removed from Nippur, the script is more simplified. Two letters mention the king's name in the salutation: for example, "may thy welfare be lasting before Shamash, Marduk, and my lord Ammi-ditana." In this respect these two letters seem to be unique.

The letters deal chiefly with official business in connection with the temple. Many of them were written by or to a high official, and in some instances perhaps to the king. There are also letters referring to private affairs. Although as a rule there are few letters from such archives that contain any considerable material of value for the reconstruction of the life of the people, this class of literature is especially important for linguistic purposes, because of the many expressions

employed which were used in everyday life, and which are not found in the formal language of the legal documents or of the religious and other texts.

The author, in discussing one of the official letters, briefly refers to the fact that it is not an original, but a copy that had been preserved in the archives at Sippar. The ancient Babylonians frequently have handed down copies of their letters. They were inclosed, addressed, and sealed like the original, and then preserved among the records in the archives of the temple. The author cites an instance of a rough draft, which contains signs and whole lines erased, having been preserved as the copy for the archives. Doubtless private individuals practiced the same custom, exactly as it is in vogue at present. In the Yale collection there are several letters from the administrative records of the Larsa temple, which were also received unopened. Upon the envelope is found the address, and also the impression of the seal of the sender.

The publication under consideration includes "the famous Lushtamar tablet," an incased letter which figured so prominently in the controversy some years ago at the University of Pennsylvania. The envelope has at last been removed, and the tablet translated. It is only just to those who precipitated that controversy to state that their contentions are fully substantiated by the contents of this letter. This tablet, as well as another in the same lot, deals with transgressions of what is known from the Hammurabi Code as the *nipātu* right, by which an obligee can take a slave or even a freeman of an obligor to work for him on account of the non-payment of a debt. It appears, however, that Lushtamar, although his claims against certain debtors, who were women, as shown by the tablet, had been satisfied, continued to hold their slaves.

The volume contains an index of the proper names of the text. This shows that the Amorite personal names, so common in the legal documents of this era from Northern Babylonia, are in evidence, as was to be expected. The number of foreign names is much smaller in the Nippur tablets. This is also the case with contracts and letters from cities farther south, as, for example, those from Larsa, as represented in the Yale collection, which contain for the most part pure Babylonian names.

As an appendix to the letters of this period, Ungnad has published the text and also the translation of an inscription of Hammurabi. This was one of the first objects secured for the university's collection, more than twenty-five years ago. It was purchased from a dealer, and apparently came from Abu-Habba, the ancient city called Sippar. The inscription is weathered considerably, but Ungnad has succeeded in deciphering all that is preserved. The inscription gives evidence that it was written

in the early part of the king's reign, prior to his conquest of Elam and Larsa; for in it Hammurabi calls himself simply "King of Babylon." It refers to the building of the wall of Sippar, which, doubtless, is the event celebrated in the dates of the king. From them we learn that in his twenty-third year the foundations of the wall were laid, and that they were finished in the twenty-fifth year of his reign. Hammurabi called the wall which he constructed In-Qibit-Shamash-Hammurabi-mahiri-irshi-shumshu, which means, "by the command of Shamash may Hammurabi not have any adversaries." He closes his inscription, after recording some other pious deeds, with these words: "Truly I have established my splendid name daily in the mouth of the people, to be mentioned like that of a god, who for all times will never be forgotten."

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THE ASIATIC DIONYSOS¹

The author of this book dips into the waters of Indic philology with a broad-meshed sieve and brings up—nothing. It is a pity that so much work should be wasted on such an antiquated mythological method. Her far-reaching conclusions are based on a very superficial knowledge of India. In the light of present-day knowledge it is fatuous to base a treatment of Soma on Langlois (1853) and Maury (1857). These books were written in the infancy of Vedic study and are negligible today. The bibliography at the end of the book is imposing at first glance; but no mention is made of a large number of recent books and articles which are indispensable for the author's purpose. Miss Davis prefers to move in an atmosphere of hazy generalities. She adds up a long row of zeros and expects to get a positive number as an answer. Lack of space prevents citation of counter-evidence and mention of important discussions which, apparently, are unknown to Miss Davis.

The aim of the book is to prove that the Dionysos cult of Greece was derived from the Vedic Soma cult. See p. 258:

The elaborate chants of the priests were, it may be conceived, preserved in the form of cult-epithets, and the metaphors applied by them to the Soma crystallized into the picturesque myths attached to the legend of Dionysos.

There must have been a wholesale disease of language in this "remembrance of the Soma ritual" (p. 184) and this "process of the formation

¹ *The Asiatic Dionysos*. By Gladys M. N. Davis. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1914. x+276 pages. 10s. 6d.